

CRANSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE WORK SESSION

JULY 11, 2012

WILLIAM A. BRIGGS BUILDING (REED CONFERENCE ROOM)

845 PARK AVENUE

EXECUTIVE SESSION 6:00 P.M.

PUBLIC SESSION IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION

**PUBLIC WORK SESSION IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING PUBLIC
SESSION**

MINUTES

The meeting of the Cranston School Committee was held on the above date with the following members present: Chairperson Iannazzi, Mr. Lombardi, Mr. Traficante and Mrs. Ruggieri. Absent were Mrs. McFarland, Mr. Bloom and Mrs. Culhane. Attorney Ronald Cascione was also present.

This meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. and convened to Executive Session pursuant to RI State Laws PL 42-46-5(a) (1) Personnel; (Discussion of Job Performance of Certified Administrator B); PL 42-46-5(a)(2) Collective Bargaining and Litigation; (Contract Negotiations' Update – Secretaries), (Maintenance of Effort), (Consideration of legal options regarding status of aid to education appropriation and legal advice relating to same).

Call to Order – Public Session was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

The roll was called; a quorum was present. No votes were taken during Executive Session.

Executive Session minutes sealed – July 11, 2012

A motion to seal these minutes was made by Mr. Lombardi, seconded by Mr. Traficante. All were in favor.

Public Work Session

a. Discussion of the Alternative Learning Program at Horton Elementary -

Karen Ostroff, Executive Director, West Bay Collaborative

Mr. Nero stated – this contract is up for renewal so I thought we would have this Worksession so the people from West Bay Collaborative could explain our program there and I am recommending a renewal of the program.

Ms. Ostroff and Brian Wilson gave an overview of the Alternative Learning Program at Horton for the past year and an analysis of same. Some of the highlights were:

- The Horton Program started out with 4-5 children last September by the end of the year we had almost three full classrooms, 16-18 children and we already had 7 children come through the program and return to their home schools.**
- The services provided to students who were at risk or trapped into special ed roles permanently were handled. We managed to defuse some of their behaviors, put in new coping mechanisms, teach them how to deal with frustration, teach them how to deal with anger and sent them back with some new behavior skills and transition them**

successfully back to their home schools.

- Youngsters that are still with us, they need some help, some may always need that help but have learned new skills. It's an ongoing process.
- Academically we have had huge success. Of the sixteen students they all showed growth in reading and seven showed more than a year in growth in math.
- We have also helped out on the front end by working with teachers and students putting some of behavioral specialists in the schools so the students would not have to go the route of Horton.

Mr. Nero stated – there were significant issues where we have had to make 911 calls and so forth and that has been significantly reduced because of the Horton Program. The other issue is, the collective bargaining unit understood and that is why they agreed to do this. There are cost factors that would be associated with this program and that would be significantly more for us. The liability issue is not with us anymore, an example would be Workmen's Comp and things of that nature. They are being proactive by going into the classrooms and working in the classrooms so the student does not end up in the Horton Program and we have grown to 16. The question I have for you is this; we did have one tuition student this year? The answer was yes, towards the end of the year but right now we are full with Cranston students.

Mr. Lombardi asked – of those 16 students how many are Cranston

students? The answer was all 16 are now our students. If we were to send them to outside placements the cost could be \$40,000 + a student on the average depending on the program they went to. They follow the curriculum to a “T” for Cranston Public Schools. They also evaluate elementary students who are on 45 day placements for disciplinary issues and follow up closely. The services (Medicaid) follow the students and that comes back to Cranston Public Schools.

Mrs. Ruggieri asked – the piece that WBC is staffing (the administration, supplies, materials, transportation, student activities) can we get some kind of budget breakdown on what is exactly being spent? Ms. Ostroff stated it is not easy for us to do it on non-specific line items because we basically price it per classroom. Mr. Balducci stated he would break it down, confer with Ms. Ostroff and submit that information at the next School Committee meeting.

There being no further business to come before the committee Mr. Lombardi made a motion to adjourn the work session. This was seconded by Mr. Traficante. All were in favor. This meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Frank S. Lombardi

Clerk